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Some of the Best

MAR 22 1961

Illinois High School Prose of 1957

CHICAGO

FOREWORD

The prose selections in this issue were chosen by Professor Herbert R. Hiatt, head of the department of English at Illinois State Normal University, and teachers on his staff.

The judges read over five hundred papers in all. Professor Hiatt says, "The entries have seemed unusually good to us. . . . Many of the papers that we have shelved are really very good. . . . So we decided to choose particularly excellent parts from some of them, paragraphs we thought your readers might enjoy.

"We have been pleased at the timeliness and variety of subjects written about—modern science, social problems, personal experiences. Many of the entries showed the clear eye and skilled hand of the artist. Before long we may hope to see some of their names in print."

The editors are grateful to Professor Hiatt and his staff for their work in choosing the compositions printed here.

TILLIE

Tillie was comfortable and loving, and the most valuable thing I owned. Tillie was my pillow. I couldn't do a thing without her. If I had food, Tillie must be offered some too. If I was frightened, Tillie had to be comforted as well as I. I couldn't even go to sleep without making sure Tillie was right beside me. *Even to this day I know where Tillie is.*

My first acquaintance with Tillie occurred in our cellar during the war in Germany. I was about three at the time and the horror of war made but a vague impression on my mind. The sounds that terrified my mother and brother were translated in my childish mind as thunder. While the bombing was going on, Tillie was my assurance against becoming frightened, and she never failed to do her job. At the time of greatest danger Tillie and I would sit happily in a corner playing games and thinking nothing of the sounds outside.

One day, to tease me, my brother put Tillie on a ledge outside and left her there. Tillie was outside! She might even get hurt in all the bombing going on there.

After making sure no one saw me, I ran outside and started to look for her. All this time bombs were falling not too far from me. I don't exactly know how long I looked for Tillie; all I know is that I found her, and that's all that mattered.

When I got back to the cellar I was told that my father had been killed. Too young to understand, I was not dismayed, as I remember. Next morning when I woke, my father was gone and so was Tillie. My father was gone, yes, but *where* was Tillie? I couldn't be consoled. Finally my mother explained that Tillie had been placed under my father's head. After that time I never asked for Tillie again.

Once my mother told me about Tillie, and said that if it hadn't been for her I wouldn't be here today. If I hadn't gone to look for Tillie I would have been asleep in the bed in which my father was killed. Tillie will always be more than just a comfortable pillow to me. For Tillie will always be something of mine that is close to a person I hardly knew, but love so much.

KERSTI RAIKULA, senior, Evanston H. S.
Ardene Stephens, teacher

OUR HOPES REST WITH "THINKERS"

The aftermath of the Soviet satellite program has been a general awakening.

Congressional committees are looking into the administration and budget of our rocket and missile program with tardy diligence.

But all their fussing and fuming will come to naught. They're looking in the wrong places. The answer to the problem lies, not solely in the government, but in the whole social setup of the country.

Intellectual pursuits are neglected for sports and social prestige. The mental giant is never openly jeered or ridiculed. He is seldom completely accepted.

The majority of us attempt to account for his intellectual interest by referring to him as "unbalanced" or "a bookworm." When a person sticks to his books and pulls out top grades, others try to minimize his accomplishment with the words, "But he studies."

Only God knows how many budding geniuses have yielded to this subtle social pressure. For want of their brains, we may some day be dominated by the brutality of Communism.

I, for one, move that we replace the popular athlete on the pedestal of public approval with the thinker.

Maybe this isn't the answer. But with the Kremlin's spheres lurking on the fringes of space, we had better do something.

ARNE RODE, senior, Lyons Twp. H. S., La Grange
Kay Keefe, teacher

From YOU JUST CAN'T WIN

She sat alone under the tree, her arms wrapped around her knees, her expression dreamy.

Next door John Barton draped his arms over the lawnmower handle and eyed his neighbor. Virginia Anne McAllister could be maddening sometimes, and this was one of those times. How could any normal American girl be so drippy, so stupid, so—so idiotic as to prefer sitting in a theater for three hours watching a shiny-headed movie star to *his* company. . . .

He opened his mouth to yell some appropriately jeering remark in her direction and then closed it abruptly. If he wanted another date with her, bellowing across the lawn was the wrong way to go about it. . . .

GRETA JOHNSON, junior, York Community H. S., Elmhurst
Eleanor A. Davis, teacher

From THE EYEBROW

While combing my hair in front of the mirror the other morning, I became fascinated with the face before me (who of us doesn't at one time or another?) I began a sort of facial calisthenics, changing my expression in countless different ways and posing as if the mirror held a secret camera behind its glassy surface. I soon became engrossed in this activity. . . . With just a slight decline of

the eyebrows I could change from an innocent young thing into a thunderously dark villain. By raising both eyebrows until my forehead wrinkled, I was asking a question. Lowering them again, not quite as far as the first time, gave me a look of concentration equal to that of a nuclear physicist figuring out a world-shaking formula. A lift of one eyebrow gave me a distinctly elfin quality.

I began thinking in earnest about my discovery of the eyebrow. I watched people as they talked, and as they communicated without words. I began to notice that the eyebrows were the main gears controlling the expression. They led the mouth into its smile and the forehead into its frown. They pushed the nose into its wrinkle at a distasteful sight or smell. . . .

Every pair of eyebrows has its own definite character, and it's amazing how well each pair matches the character of its owner, how frequently big, gruff men have heavy, dark, bushy eyebrows, while brows of little, nervous men are weak and thin. A pretty woman usually has a soft, finely arched eyebrow; a sharp, harsh woman, a pencil-thin striking line for an eyebrow.

JOAN SHEAGREN, senior, West Rockford H. S.
Lois Dilley, teacher

CHICAGO

What is a city? What are the things that go to make up its character?

Chicago is the cold November breeze chilling you as you step out onto State Street from the warm, brilliant interior of the Marshall Field and Company store. Chicago is the soft hum from the traction motors of an Illinois Central commuter coach as a train of anxious suburbanites leaves the Randolph Street Station in the distance. Chicago is standing on the dock of the Chicago Yacht Club watching the boats bob and dance on the waves of Lake Michigan or just feeling the cool lake breeze rustle your shirt. Chicago is the rush of commuters leaving their "nine-to-five" jobs with the thoughts of a glowing fireplace and a good meal to whet their appetites. It is the crowd of somewhat "unreal" people that you meet walking down Michigan Boulevard. It is the bird's eye view of the city from the observation tower of the Wrigley Building. Chicago is the endless stream of automobiles along Lake Shore Drive and the harmonic blend of the screech of tires on the two sharp curves just north of Randolph Street. It is the faint odor of Diesel oil in the train shed of the Union Station. It is the end-

lessness one feels when standing in the front of the "El" train as the dwarf signals in the distance blink green, and as mile after mile flicks past. Chicago is churches and schools and hospitals, and the hopes of four million people.

This is Chicago.

DAVID JOHNSON, sophomore, Normal Community H. S.
Dorothy Stauffer, teacher

A PAIR OF BOOTS

"I hope you boys will be happy with us," Maurine said. She was standing in the doorway of the room where Tod and I were to sleep. She was a small woman, thin from work and worry. Neill stood beside her in sharp contrast. He was quite tall and muscular. They were to be our mother and father, now that Dad has passed away leaving us with no relatives to take care of us. Neill had worked on our farm for as long as I could remember; then he had married Maurine and moved to the adjoining farm. Now, after the sale of our home and furniture, we had moved in with him and Maurine.

"We want you boys to feel right at home," Neill was saying. "You're both good sized and can help me in the fields just as you helped your dad. He was a fine man and raised some fine crops."

"We'll try and help you as much as possible, Neill," I answered. "We appreciate everything you've done for us."

With that Maurine smiled a motherly sort of smile, not unlike the way my own mother used to show her pleasure, and came over to tuck our patchwork quilts up and say goodnight. When she shut the door I heard her say something to Neill about our being so young and his mumbled reply.

In the next few weeks Tod and I were closer than we ever had been before. Neill and Maurine were very understanding, but there was still the gap that had been filled by our father. We worked almost all of the time in the fields or about the barn.

We always had everything we needed, Maurine saw to that, but there was one thing I wanted more than anything. That was a pair of big, high-top boots like those Neill wore. He used to clomp around so that you could hear him for nearly a mile, it seemed to me. One evening I was sitting on the floor polishing his boots, taking great care to make them shine just right, and Neill seemed to sense how I felt about them.

He spoke, "Karl, the day you grow up and show me you are a man, you'll have your very own pair of boots."

From that night on, I did my very best not to complain, and to act as old as I could. It was terribly hard sometimes, and I wasn't always successful, but how I tried nobody knows. I began to wonder what Neill meant when he said "grow up." I thought I had met the qualifications, but Neill hadn't seemed to notice. After all, wasn't I taking Nancy to the dance tonight? I guessed when a fellow started going out with girls he was just about big enough for anything . . . almost.

Finally I got through the hot day's work and sat down to eat a hurried supper, planning for my date, when Neill said, "Karl, we didn't get the haying done and it looks like rain, so let's get our supper down and get out there to finish it tonight."

I sat there and looked at him in disbelief. He couldn't mean tonight, not the night I had a date with Nancy! My anger arose, and finally I blurted out, "You just think you can boss us around because you're so much older. You aren't my father! I've got a date tonight, so you decide we have to work! Well, I just don't think it's fair. We're big boys now and can take care of ourselves. We don't need anyone to tell us what to do."

The way Neill sat there and looked disappointed in me sent a hurt chill clear down to my toes. Finally, he got up without a word, went out the door and headed for the fields. Tears of shame filled my eyes, but I left the room before they could spill out. I went straight to the phone and dialed Nancy's number with shaking fingers. I explained I couldn't make it tonight but made plans for the following night. I silently blessed her for being so understanding, then went out to the hay field and busied myself without a word or a glance at Neill.

As I worked I gazed around me at the beautiful sky and landscape. Something caught in my throat the way Christmas carols do every December. There were the long purple shadows cast from the fir trees . . . the wood thrush . . . the owl. Then a star slipped out and took its place in the darkening sky. Now the moon was coming up, casting a silvery light over the fields. Suddenly I knew, now I was grown up. I felt it in my heart and knew it in my mind. It was ecstasy.

The next evening at supper, amid the clatter of forks and plates, Neill said, "Maurine, I'm afraid you'll have to go to the house warming without me tonight. The old mare is sick, and I'll have

to stay with her. I doubt if anything will happen, but she needs medicine and might require some attention."

I looked up calmly and said, "You go ahead with Maurine, Neill, I'll take care of the mare. I was with you the last time she was sick, and I'll know what to do."

"But I thought you had a date with Nancy tonight," he answered, looking surprised.

"I do, but I can call it off. She won't mind, I know. You and Maurine haven't been out in a long time and it would do you both a lot of good." I paused and looked at Maurine's face that reflected her pleasure and a little pride, I thought. "Now you two better hurry up or you'll be late."

It was late that night when they got home and Neill came out to the barn to see about the mare. He was smiling when he came in the door and said, "Okay, Karl. You'd better go get some sleep now. It's late and you have to get up in the morning to help with the chores; then you can take Maurine in to town. Oh, and by the way, don't forget your wool socks; a pair of boots can be mighty uncomfortable without them."

SUE SITES, junior, MacArthur H. S., Decatur
Helen Stapp, teacher

From OF DEAD CATS AND SUCH

Martha Donnel is positively the weirdest person I've ever met. Martha was my roommate here at State. But then she was Lily Donnel's daughter and Lily Donnel was my mother's best friend.

"You two will have such a lovely time together at college, dear," Mother had said. "But do remember to look after Martha; she's just a child."

I had never thought of Martha as a child, but she was different, really different. Her mousy brown hair was cut in a straight line and formed a box-like frame for her plain little face. . . .

Let me tell you about the dead cat. Martha was a biology major and she always had the urge to experiment, or whatever they do. So in the winter she kept a frozen cat on the window sill, and thawed it out whenever she had the urge.

Strange as it may sound, Martha had a boyfriend. Oh, they never dated or did anything so common, but they always walked around the campus. Nature Study is the correct term, I believe. Anyway, she had been going with Ronald for ages, but he hadn't given her his frat pin. Shocking, I thought. Utterly plebeian. . . .

So that's the story of Martha. She's not my roommate any more. She now lives in the quarters for married couples. And I'm still living the gay life at Alpha Delta Alpha. Oh, yes, the cat is still on the window sill. I plan to do some experimenting of my own. Biology must be a fascinating subject.

SUE SEBASTIAN, York Community H. S., Elmhurst
Eleanor A. Davis, teacher

"SOME DAYS IT JUST DOESN'T PAY"

"Only five minutes till closing time," I thought as I stood in the library watching the people clear out. "That means I'll be only ten minutes late if I run all the way. Oh hurry up, people! Why don't you all go home?"

Then suddenly from behind me came the voice of doom, "I'm through with the reading machine now. *You* can put it away."

"Oh no!" I thought. "Not the reading machine! Anything but the reading machine!"

Slowly I made my way to the reading machine. Tenderly I patted the ugly gray monster with the glass stomach. "Nice little fiend!" I said. "You're a dear little apparatus. Cute little machine isn't going to act up, is it?" I was late enough without spending ten or fifteen minutes putting the belt back on. (It inevitably comes off when one rewinds the microfilm.)

"Oh, blast you!" I spoke silently as I looked at the film. "That idiot using the film couldn't possibly have found what he wanted in the first few feet. No, not him. He had to roll out all eighty feet of the film." (At least it seemed like eighty; or more.)

As I slowly began rewinding the film, I knew that I was hoping for too much to expect the belt not to slip off as it always does going backwards. And it was slipping. And it did.

Even as I stood there patting the hideous affair, saying, "Easy does it now! Good Boy! You're doing fine now!" I heard the tell-tale clink of the chain, and I knew that it had fallen from the wheel.

When I finally got it fixed, I shooed all the people out of the library, turned out the lights, waited while Miss Bailey locked the door, dashed the two blocks to the high school, and was just coming up the steps as the people I was to meet were coming out of the door.

"We knew you were detained," they said. "So we're all going home. See you tomorrow."

Slowly I counted to ten as they went down the steps and left me standing there. Then suddenly I laughed as I realized how true the old saying was: "Some days it just doesn't pay to get up!"

BOB DAVIS, senior, Jacksonville H. S.
Emma Mae Leonhard, teacher

From SOLITAIRE

Tall, crooked trees sprang strangely out of the earth and stabbed the black sky with their gaunt fingers. A misty rain covered the pavement with a glistening, diamond-like sheen. Weird shadows of fog crept on pussy-feet between the shapeless houses and mingled in a ghost-like dance.

I couldn't go home now. I couldn't face that dark musty room cluttered with crumpled balls of paper, unread books, piled-up homework, and dust. Even the gooseneck lamp with its glaring circle of light would taunt me. No, I couldn't go home.

I started walking. Maybe I could go to a friend's house—one full of warmth and light and happiness. No, I'm not used to happiness; I have it too seldom to make its acquaintance. Perhaps I could go to a movie. Movies with action and shooting help me forget sometimes. I walked to the theater and stood in the rain for a long time looking at the garish posters, but I didn't go in. What was the use of forgetting when all the pain would come back later, worse? It would be quiet in the library; maybe I could get some work done. I approached it, but walked on in the cool wind, alone.

Now I know that I will always walk alone. I will open books and never finish them; I will start writing and end up drawing empty, lonely faces. At school I am a stranger; at home I am a transient. I will always wish for happiness and friends, but I know they will never be mine. For I am alone.

KAREN MARGARET SCHOCH, junior, Lyons Twp. H. S., La Grange
Josephine Allen, teacher

From I ROUNDED UP THE BOYS

Paul Bunyan was planning a reception after his niece's wedding. Now Paul never believed in doing anything except in the biggest way possible; so he roofed over the entire state of New Mexico, installed air conditioning, and had himself the biggest dance hall

in the world. . . . To provide the music for the gala affair, he asked me to be warmed up and ready to go on the night of the dance.

Hurricane Smith was our terrific trumpet tooter, and Limber Limb Jim was our chief skin beater. Foghorn MacDough played the piccolo, and Thin Tim Flin blew up a storm on the saxophone and the licorice stick. Tubby Bilger (that's me) gave the old bull fiddle a good beating, and Slidin' Sam really slid the slide on the slush pump. Last, but not least, on the piano we had Fingers von Melody to fascinate the audience with his fabulous flying fingers.

Now our group was the jumpingest, swingingest, bunch of merry music makers that ever belted out the beats on this good old earth. . . .

BOYD BILGER, senior, Ottawa Twp. H. S.
Isabella Sanders, teacher

From GRANDFATHER

"Once you decide to do something, don't let anybody talk you out of it," my grandfather's voice thunders down to me over the years. "Just be sure you're doing what's right and then go ahead." . . .

As I look back, I see him sitting in the rocking chair of the staunch, yellow brick farm house, an uncleaned rifle in his hands, a wistful, faraway look in his stormy gray eyes.

ED BRENNAN, junior, Evanston Twp. H. S.
Ralph Potter, teacher

From THE STORM

A lone bird's wing slices the air with deadly accuracy. . . . The brittle leaves utter hoarse whispers as they scurry in busy clusters. Soon the wind flees through the sighing grasses, like a dog who has lost its master.

MELINDA CAMPBELL, freshman, Kewanee H. S.
Eugene Ennis, teacher

From METAMORPHOSIS

Suddenly she was racing down the grassy slope, her bare feet scarcely touching the carpet of green beneath her. Her sun-drenched hair reflected the burning gold and red of the western sky. Her blue apron, caught up and held high, spilled over with the

lush bounty of the purple wild grapes and crimson berries from the hillside. She glanced over her shoulder at the shadow of futility on the crest of the hill. . . .

In a moment he would outdistance her. The moment came. With a sudden rush like the whirr of wings in flight, he passed. She glimpsed his tawny leather coat, his smoke-gray vest, and caught the burnished gleam of his copper sandals. On his head he wore a russet cap with a jaunty flame-colored feather; in his hand he clutched a bag of chestnuts. As he sped by, the wind whipped the feather from his cap and sent it scurrying crazily to the ground. She stooped to snatch it up, but when she reached for it, there was only a dried brown leaf.

MELODY MALTBY, sophomore, Evanston Twp. H. S.
Geraldine LaRocque, teacher

LUST FOR LIFE

I quickened my steps as I neared the hospital equipment room, keeping my fingers crossed that I would be able to fit all of the large packs of linen into the autoclave. As I walked down the long corridor, I glanced into the dark rooms of the proud new mothers who now, at 11:15 lay sleeping.

After I had released the pressure in the large sterilizer, I filled it with linen packs. Setting the time for sixty minutes, I returned to the north nursery. Immediately I realized that something was wrong. Two doctors and several nurses were busy working at the second isolate. I learned that a three-pound, two ounce baby boy had just joined the nursery but was not expected to be with us long. Eventually the doctors left, and the nurses returned to their individual jobs. There was nothing more they could do for the tiny fellow. I was left alone in the north nursery. The large room was quiet, except for the soft crying of one of the twenty-two little newborns. Suddenly, looking at the new addition through the steamed plastic isolate sides, I realized he was crying for far more than his own satisfaction or a tiny hunger pain. This three-pound human being was fighting—valiantly fighting—for his life so recently acquired.

Little did he realize that he was not alone in this fight for life. Throughout the hospital, the town, the country, all kinds of persons: those of wealth, those who knew only poverty, those very young, and those very old were all struggling to hold on to the most important gift ever given to them—life.

The seventy-eight year old woman in room 305 was paralyzed from her waist down. As she lay in bed day after day, her only contact with the world outside the hospital was her frequent letters which she wrote to her older sister. Her hands and her arms were her life, and she fought with all the power in her small shriveled body to keep control of this last ability.

However, the old and the very young are not the only ones who struggle for life. A newlywed lay dying of throat cancer in room 226. As the last day approached never did I see the sparkle of life leave his dark eyes. He was friendly, optimistic, even cheerful. He had fought death to the end, but he had lost.

Perhaps we who are so busy living our hurried and confused lives forget the real thing. Until the small threads of life seem to be escaping from us, we fail to appreciate it.

The baby crying weakly in the isolate, the college athlete breathing easily again with the help of an iron lung, the young mother desperately praying for a miracle to heal her of leukemia, the old man, now mute because of a stroke: all had a common goal—to keep alive.

After working and talking with people so eager for life, even a teen-age nurse's aide can grasp a truer meaning of God's important gift to us.

Suddenly, as I was washing a plastic crib, my thoughts were interrupted by the steady, impatient buzz of the autoclave. I came back to reality. Quickly I looked over at the second isolate before leaving the room to shut off the noisy sterilizer. His breathing was better, not so deep and irregular. Maybe, I prayed, he'd make it. I hoped so. Life's too wonderful to miss.

DONNA BLOMSTRANN, senior, Lyons Twp. H. S., La Grange
Norma Jordan, teacher

THE JACKAL'S REDEMPTION

Sydney Carton, introduced as "the idlest and most uncompromising of men," was a confused and lonely individual, who had been dealt many cruel blows by life, fate, God, or whatever may rule men's lives. His physical appearance contradicted his mental state, since he looked like a middle-class gentleman. Charles Dickens, the author of *A Tale of Two Cities*, gave him the pseudonym of the jackal.

Since Carton lacked the fortitude or the perseverance to succeed in life, he turned to alcohol as a solace and an undemanding com-

panion. But as he lived in an age of excessive drinking, the period of the French Revolution, the drinking did not set him apart from other men; it only made him more disagreeable and repulsive than he naturally was.

Recognizing alcoholism as a neurotic illness, we must assume that Sydney Carton was a personality who was mentally unbalanced. He scorned his problem of alcohol, and he held in extreme contempt his other defects in maturity and development of character. Within himself he knew he was a misanthrope and an outcast from society. Alcohol played the protagonist in his continual struggle with his environment. He still remained contemptible in his own mind, and life always seemed too grim, too harsh, too demanding, or too over-powering.

Throughout his unhappy life he had been exploited by others. Even during his school days he had been accustomed to working other boys' lessons and not working his own. His keen, discerning mind solved many complex problems of law that his lawyer-friend, Stryver, could not solve.

Carton's relation with Stryver, a driving, rising, shouldering, pressing lawyer, was another facet in his personality. Through his association with a person who was a success in the material world, he gained some respectability and prestige in his own mind. But not enough to save him. Really the gain was an illusion, only an unreal mental image, for there was no respectability in Carton, who could be called a truly incompatible man.

His need was quite apparent; he needed some one to love him and to be loved by him. In this respect Lucie Manette appeared to be, at least, a partial solution to this basic emotional need. Lucie Manette, a golden-haired angel, gave Carton his only companionship and love in life. To her he told the sad reminiscences of his youth; unwanted, unloved, and exploited, he had struggled through his adolescence and early adulthood.

He was surprised at the kind manner with which Lucie treated him. The gentleness and understanding offered to him were amazing gifts of fortune, but he was still a hopeless case of inadequacy and frustration. The warmth and feeling given by Lucie had come too late to be of any significant purpose in reforming Sydney. His acrimonious acts and disgusting demeanor had carried him almost to instinctive antipathy and distrust of everyone with whom he came in contact.

But Carton was not to remain desolate. A metamorphic change came over his mind as he saw Fate cast Lucie into dire plight.

Her husband, Charles Darnay, a member of an aristocratic family, was to be sent to the guillotine because of his royal blood. Lucie, remorseful and overcome with grief at the impending disaster, was a pitiful figure to Sydney's adoring gaze, and he decided to change places with Darnay.

With the aid of an anaesthetic he accomplished the change in Darnay's cell. There in the prison he continued to show his strength by befriending a poor seamstress, condemned the same as he. To her Carton gave strength and courage; he comforted her as best he could.

A noble, courageous man had emerged from a cocoon of alcohol and discouragement. At last he was to redeem himself. The words he spoke as he walked to the guillotine were a summary of his life. "It is a far, far, better thing that I do than I have ever done; it is a far, far, better rest that I go to than I have ever known." The great sacrifice he made for Lucie showed that he had piety in his heart but animosity in his mind.

Sydney Carton remained to the end of his life excruciatingly trying to all who knew him. No one understood him, and very few persons tried to understand him. His last magnanimous act set him above those who had attempted to save him and above those who had exploited him.

ROY LILY, senior, Genoa-Kingston Community Unit
Gladys Wibking, teacher

A NIGHT AT THE FAIR

The fading sun is slowly settling beyond the broad green meadows. A night at the 4-H fair grounds, with all its adventures, excitement, and pranks, is quickly becoming a reality. The blazing flame of an hour ago is now just a purple haze in the western sky. The stifling heat of the day is slowly being replaced by a cooler breeze, now slightly stirring. The livestock are becoming less restless now, and quietness is settling in. The fragrance of freshly cut clover is permeating the air. Darkness is here.

I have just finished spreading out a make-shift bed with a mattress of clean, yellow straw. It looks and feels very comfortable, and as though I ought to be able to get a full night's sleep; but I know from past experiences that no one sleeps very much at the fair. Soon I hear the familiar sloshing and splashing of water in buckets carried by unknown hands who seek out the unwary in their sleep. Strange sounds fill the air. A cow lows; a hog squeals.

Stealthy and mysterious footsteps come nearer; I hold my breath; I can nearly hear my heart beating. The unsuspecting victim of the water carrier lets out a blood-curdling yell. I hear footsteps echoing down the road. Then there is silence for a brief time, and then more weird noises. It seems strange perhaps, but no one will be able to remember a thing about tonight's happenings in the morning when the farm adviser makes his rounds.

Finally, not long after the last "prankster" has "hit the hay," the familiar red globe peers over the horizon, ready to begin another day. The night is gone.

TOM HOPKINS, sophomore, Hopkins H. S., Granville
Alice Rehn, teacher

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Not long ago I stood before the bathroom mirror, staring moodily at my reflection. A few minutes before, I had come to the conclusion that I must decide what kind of person I am. Am I another Marilyn Monroe? I dashed to get the tape measure. 34—23—36—Himmmm! I guess not. Maybe Ivy Baker Priest? Heavens, no! I can't even add two and two. I decided figures of any type were completely out of my line. How about Clara Barton? Not too good an idea; the sight of blood makes me faint. All of this was extremely discouraging to my ego as I stood asking myself over and over, "Who are you? Who are you?" Suddenly it came to me: I am myself. Grabbing an apple from Mother's dining room centerpiece, I sat down to think what kind of person "myself" is.

As I took my first bite, I thought of all the things I enjoy. I like to go barefooted and feel soft mud squish up between my toes. Crying in a movie is one of my chief delights, for then my boy friend, who hates tears, promises to buy me a pizza if I'll only stop. Late at night, I dig a novel—one labeled "questionable" by my mother—from under the covers and lie for hours losing my youthful naivete. People fascinate me, especially the kind of people who have crew cuts and wear levis. That's right, boy people. Because I'm an ugly duckling, I appreciate beauty. The song of a bird, a black-eyed Susan growing in the woods, a tiny pink baby—these are my kind of beauty, the kind of beauty that makes me want to wrinkle up my nose and weep a little weep.

But my life isn't all sweetness and light. What about the daily drudgeries I face? I borrowed another apple from the bowl and began some serious contemplation. Every morning at seven o'clock

I have to practice my piano lesson. This is bad enough. But when I'm done, do I get to eat breakfast? No, I get to practice my flute. And emptying the garbage! I always spill coffee grounds on my white bucks. I dislike losing my temper, for when I do, my face turns a vivid orange and I look like a jack-o-lantern with a pony tail. The chief irritation of my life is trying to talk with people who have nothing to say. This isn't a conversation; it's a monologue!

Several hours later, after Mother's centerpiece and my thoughts were both exhausted, I jumped up and raced to the bathroom mirror once again. There I saw the reflections of many persons—a pony-tailed teenager and a sophisticated young adult, my mother's darling and the teacher's problem—all wrapped into one. This was "myself."

SUE PERRINE, senior, Bushnell-Prairie City H. S.
Adele Armstrong, teacher

From THE JOURNEY

As far back as Jim's people could remember, they had been living on the space ship. No one really knew when the journey had started, or what its purpose had been. All that was known was that the journey had begun at a place called Earth and that the people had been living on the ship for many generations. For all they could tell, they would live there for eternity.

This thought did not trouble anyone. The ship was very large and contained everything they needed. In the lower part were the gardens, where a plentiful supply of food was raised under strontium lamps. In other areas of this lower section were factories. Above these were vast areas for recreation and entertainment. . . . On the next higher floor were places for learning and study. Many books were kept there, and Jim had read a great number of them. It troubled him, however, that none of the ancient books, the books that told about the beginning, were left. He wanted to find out about the beginning and about what was to come, but there was no way. . . .

. . . On one wall was a picture screen that showed myriads of stars against a black background . . . always changing, yet always the same.

All this was familiar to Jim. . . . But there was one part of the ship about which he knew nothing, a part which no one ever visited. That was the rear section where power was created. The people no longer knew how, but they were aware of a constant low

rumble. They knew that this was the life of the ship. If the rumble stopped, life would cease. But this would never happen. . . .

Jim could tell this day was strange. The ship's constant motion somehow felt different. Then, at 17.42 on the synchronome, a tremendous jolt shook the ship. But this was not all. The picture on the screen had changed! Instead of blackness and stars, it now showed a garden blooming with flowers. . . .

Finally the huge door swung outward, and Jim looked out on forests and gardens. Here and there, remains of rubble were visible. He knew then that the journey was over, and somehow he sensed that the big ship had returned to its starting point.

What Jim did not know was that thousands of years ago, before the great cataclysm when radioactivity had destroyed life on Earth, his foresighted ancestors had constructed a gigantic twenty-first century Noah's Ark by which they had been able to preserve the human race until life on Earth should be regenerated through the processes of nature.

PETER SCHUBELER, sophomore, East Rockford H. S.
Virginia Wildi, teacher

From BIBLE CLASS

On the quiet roadside, about three miles north from the center of Nagoya City, Japan, one can find this bulletin in front of a small American-type house: "Bible Class in English, Saturday, 6:30 p.m." It is in this class that two kind-hearted American missionary ladies, Miss Sargeant and Miss Raun, are spending busy days preaching the Gospel to the Japanese people who live in their neighborhood.

It was on a cold Christmas Eve that I visited this small church to practice my English conversation. The building was so small that the room was crowded with only thirty people, who sat on the simply-made chairs arranged in order. Although this was the first time that I had been there, I could feel the earnest and mild atmosphere which dominated the small room, and this pleasant evening left me with the desire to return.

After some visits, I became quite familiar with the preaching, and acquainted with the two ladies and the people who usually attended. I remember one Saturday evening in spring when I called on them as usual a little before half past six. At the door I was kindly asked by Miss Sargeant, "How are you this evening, Kurokawa-San?" and she handed me a Bible and a hymn book.

I bowed to my Bible classmates who had arrived earlier than I. Some of them were students, while others were workmen, engineers, and farmers. . . . Down the aisle, only about ten feet long, I walked quietly to where Miss Raun was seated and was greeting one member after another. In the front part of the room, there was only an organ, and a table with some Bibles, a vase with flowers in it, and a few Japanese dictionaries. . . .

After a prayer and a hymn, we began at Matthew 21, verse 33, the parable about the vineyard that was rented to wicked tenants by a kind master. Miss Sargeant taught us in such an easy way and in such clear English that I could really understand the profound meaning of the parable. One of the reasons that I remember and choose this evening as an example of the preaching over there is that this parable impressed me very much. After teaching fifteen or sixteen verses, Miss Sargeant finished the chapter, and then Miss Raun taught us as many verses in the next chapter. The study took us about one hour, and that was the ordinary time for the preaching we had there. Again we sang a hymn, and prayed to Father in Heaven. Thus one of the Bible classes I attended was finished. . . .

This is a story of our small missionary church in Japan. We do not know any further than that it is a church of Christ. The missionaries do not tell us about their sect, and we do not have any reason why we should know it. We are learning about Christ, and that is enough.

TATSUO KUROKAWA, senior, Stephen Decatur H. S.
Thelma M. Franklin, teacher

THE CHRISTMAS GOOSE

Up in the bare, windswept moors of northern England, during the early decades of the nineteenth century, there stood the little village of Whitlow. It was not much of a village; indeed there was very little to it, and one could see it all in one afternoon. It was quiet and peaceful most of the time, still clinging to the old customs and traditions and caring little about what went on beyond the wide moors which isolated it from the rest of the world.

Lord Pyramus Bartlett-Henshaw, Fourth Earl of Wyndhamgate and Lady Alcestis Bartlett-Henshaw lived in a fine mansion on the outskirts of town.

The Earl was dull-witted, coarse, and quite a glutton, and Lady Alcestis was thin, pursed up, and cold. The Earl came into town only once a month, to collect rent and other debts.

One of his debtors was Basil MacAllistar, the local butcher. He was cross, selfish, and miserly, but a true artist at his trade. He owed the old Earl a considerably large sum of money, and the thought of having to give up his precious money was more than he could bear.

He loved his money; he adored it. And so that the old Earl might not know about his wealth and make him pay his debt, he lived in one small, dark room behind his shop, and whenever the Earl came to collect his money, he would sob on his shoulder and tell him how hard the times were for a poor butcher, and the old Earl would go away, while Basil MacAllistar's money pile grew higher and higher.

Basil had one son, a boy of seven whose mother had died when he was very small. The boy's name was Philip. He was a strange boy, quiet and imaginative. He had very few human companions, and his father treated him cruelly, for he was a firm believer in "Spare the rod and spoil the child."

But this did not seem to bother Philip much. During the summer many of the townspeople would see him wandering through the heather, musing and daydreaming, and always accompanying him was Purity, his white goose. She was called Purity because of her whiteness, and she was extremely beautiful, for, though plump, she had a strange, swan-like grace about her. She was his constant companion, and they walked together on the moors sometimes for hours before returning home. Many think a boy and his dog are a pretty sight, but there was an indescribable beauty in the scene of the small boy and the graceful white goose walking towards the village, the golden rays of the sunset illuminating the glossy down on the goose and giving the rosy face beneath the golden curls of the boy an angelic beauty.

But that was in the summertime, and now it was winter—December 20, to be exact, and the tiny village was bursting with gaiety befitting the season. On this afternoon, as the evening mists were beginning to rise over the barren moors, Philip, who had been making deliveries for his father, and Purity, his everfaithful companion, were returning home. As they entered the small poultry yard next to the shop they saw the door open and three people come out into the yard. One of them Philip recognized as his father, and the other two, although he had never seen them before, he knew could be none other than the dread Fourth Earl himself and Lady Alcestis.

"We wish a fine goose for our Yuletide dinnah, m'good mawn," her Ladyship was saying stiffly, "and we shall take nothing but the finest you hawve."

"Quite right, m'deah," came the nasal, grating voice of the Earl.

Philip ducked behind a henhouse and held Purity close. Even she seemed to know what that meant. The titled two examined each specimen and each was unsatisfactory in some way. Then came the catastrophe. In crouching down, Philip stepped on Purity's foot, and she let out a frightened squawky that instantly gave them away. In almost no time the Honorable Earl and the Honorable Lady had chosen Purity for their Christmas dinner.

Before Philip could utter any startled protests, they had it all arranged. Purity would be kept and fattened, on the twenty-fourth she would be butchered and dressed, and delivered to the Manor House.

Philip screamed and fought, but his beloved Purity was taken from his arms and borne away by the money-craving butcher, who thought of the goose only as a means to pay off part of his debt to the Earl without having to part with his cherished money.

During the next three days, Purity was tied up and crammed with food. She seemed to sense that something undesirable would soon happen, and she grew morose and melancholy.

As the cold, gray dawn of the fourth day—the day—crept through the windows of the village, little Philip climbed out of his bed. His father snored loudly, rhythmically, soundly. Noiselessly the little boy dressed in his warmest clothes, took a few muffins from the pantry, threw a warm shawl over his arm and tiptoed out. In the poultry yard all was still. He wrapped the warm shawl around Purity, untied her, and very gently picked her up, trying not to wake her. Lest she create a disturbance, he held her beak shut until they reached the moor. Thus the two companions went out to face the world.

Snow began to fall. Stopping only to eat their cold muffins, they plodded on across the moor. Dawn turned to morning, morning to afternoon, and afternoon to dusk. Philip carried Purity part of the way, keeping her wrapped in the shawl. The light snowfall became a driving storm, and at last his little aching legs gave way and he collapsed in the snow. Purity snuggled under his arm, and they curled up together.

At last the storm began to let up, and now only a few flakes fell here and there over the glistening white landscape. A peasant

woman, taking advantage of the calm, hurried toward her cottage on the moor. She had been returning from the village and, caught in the storm, had been obliged to stay at a friend's house.

A tree root, hidden by the snow, tripped her, and she fell. Recovering herself, she saw, not three feet ahead of her, two frozen bodies, half covered with snow—a goose and a little boy. Then, as she started to rise, her eyes beheld a marvelous sight. Off in the distance the sky glowed with a brilliancy of rainbow hues she had never seen before. The heather was in blossom, its green leaves and purple flowers nodding in the breeze, as a shining white goose, swan-like and beautiful, waddled across the moor followed by a little boy whose face was radiant with heavenly sanctity and whose curls glowed in the sunset-like threads of burnished silk.

ROBERT PUGH, eighth grade, Edison Junior H. S., Champaign
Mrs. James Sloneker, teacher

DRAMATIC IRONY

Dramatic irony is an intriguing element that I learned to watch for while reading *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*. It occurs when the actors show themselves to be ignorant of a fact or facts which the audience knows to be true.

Macbeth enters the room quite appropriately after Duncan has philosophized, "There's no art to find the mind's construction in the face." Duncan is speaking of the late Thane of Cawdor and does not realize that it applies to Macbeth also. One can imagine the members of the audience nodding wisely to themselves.

Macbeth says to Banquo, "Fail not our feast," and Banquo answers unknowingly, "My lord, I will not," unaware that Macbeth plots to kill him. To be sure, neither is aware that Banquo's ghost will come to taunt Macbeth at the feast.

Later, Ross comes to tell Macduff that Macbeth has killed all his family and the members of his household. Macduff anxiously questions, "The tyrant has not battered at their peace?" The news is so terrible that Ross lamely replies, "They were well at peace when I did leave 'em." The audience feels deep sympathy for Macduff, knowing the tremendous blow in store for him.

When the castle is in a panic over Duncan's murder, Macduff must tell Lady Macbeth what has happened. He addresses her as "Gentle Lady," not knowing her part in the murder. To the audience, the word *gentle* has an especial irony.

During the course of *Hamlet*, Ophelia goes mad and speaks to the Queen, presenting flowers and saying, "There's fennel for you and columbines. . . ." Ophelia does not realize that the audience regards the columbine as a symbol of faithlessness, nor does she know how appropriate it is to give that flower to the fickle Queen.

An ironic twist occurs also during the graveyard scene. The very fact that Hamlet unwittingly jests at Ophelia's grave seems to the audience too pitiful.

The King himself is the target of an ironic dart tossed by Hamlet through a letter. The King boastingly says to Laertes, "You shortly shall hear more," meaning to relate his plan of putting Hamlet to death in England. However, at that exact moment, the letters from Hamlet are delivered by the sailors, and the audience sees the King completely disarmed.

Now that I have discovered the meaning of dramatic irony, plays have become more interesting to read and more exciting to watch, including those on television.

JUDY GREENESS, senior, University H. S., Normal
Ruth Stroud, teacher

HAPPILY EVER AFTER

"And then what happened?" I cried excitedly.

The old man rubbed his hands together and smiled at me out of the sides of his eyes.

"Well, Honey Bun, what do you think? The prince stooped down and kissed the princess. She woke up, and the two of them left the castle and lived happily ever after." I hopped down off the big overstuffed chair, told Sam I'd be back to see him tomorrow, and skipped out the door.

He was the oldest old man I had ever known, and the nicest—and in my nine years of living I had known quite a few. "Storybook Sam" was what most people called him. And man, oh, man, could he ever tell stories!

This story left me happy and elated—just as all Sam's stories did. Storybook Sam didn't have a job, and he had few friends. Practically the only person who ever came to see him was me. Yet he never seemed lonely, and day after day he had that good-natured smile in his eyes. I was always welcome, and he seemed to love telling his tantalizing tales as much as I loved hearing them.

As I climbed the hill on my way home, the many parts of the story kept running through my mind, but they were stopped

abruptly as I entered the kitchen door. "Where have you been? Do you know that it is seven o'clock, and that dinner was ready an hour ago?" This was my mother. She always got mad at me! I really couldn't blame her, for when Sam was telling stories, I lost all track of time.

"I'm sorry," I feebly replied. I knew there was no sense in trying to explain.

"Oh, well," said Mother, "school starts tomorrow and you won't be able to go to Sam's until Saturday."

"Imagine!" I thought. "Five days without seeing Sam!"

The week passed quickly, and it wasn't long before I awoke Saturday morning, ate a big breakfast, and found myself scurrying down the hill to the childhood refuge I knew so well. Here I could curl up on the arm of the chair and forget everything except the soothing voice, telling of many adventures. But when I arrived, one of the neighborhood women met me at the door. I asked for Sam, and she said, "Child, didn't you know that he's been ill this week? He's such an old man to be living by himself. Why don't you come back tomorrow?"

"All right," I replied as I disappointedly left the house. I worried all day! What if Sam should die? That night I cried so hard that Mother had to come in to soothe me. We said a special prayer for Sam; and after she assured me that everything was going to be all right, I finally slept.

I went to Sunday School the next morning; so I didn't get to go to Sam's until after lunch. As I neared his door, my fears of the preceding night returned, and I could feel big tears welling up in my eyes. I caught them, for I knew Sam wouldn't want to see me crying. Besides, maybe he was going to be well again. I knocked on the door, and then pushed it open and peered inside. In the gloom I could barely make out the figure on the old bed across the room.

"Who is it?" came a feeble voice.

"It's me," I replied in a wavering tone.

"Come on in, child. Where've you been?"

"Oh, school started."

"Ah, yes. You're in the fourth grade, aren't you?"

"Uh huh."

Sam looked so awful! I just couldn't help crying.

"What's the matter, child?"

"Oh, Sam," I said, "are you going to be all right?"

"Of course," he replied. His eyes began to smile again—just for a moment. Then he asked, "Have I brought you any happiness?"

It sounded like such a funny question. I hardly understood him. "Why, yes," I stammered, "lots and lots."

"Good," he said, "that makes me happier. We've had some wonderful times together, haven't we?"

"Oh, yes!"

"When you grow up," he began steadily and confidently, "always remember that, when things go wrong, you can't expect your problems to be solved with wishes granted by make-believe. But if you look ahead, and never give up, you will find that there is someone who always cares for you. Do you know who it is?"

"Who?" I asked.

"God—and if you believe in Him, no matter where you may be, you will always know that He is by your side. And, if you believe in Him, I'm sure you will find your wonderful prince and live happily ever after. Can you remember that?"

"Yes, I'll always remember."

Sam didn't say any more. He just smiled, "Goodbye," and went to sleep. I left the rooms, and began my short journey home. The tears ran freely down my cheeks now, because I had a feeling that I had just heard Sam's last story. Although I was small, I understood a part of its meaning. They had told us in Sunday School that if we were good girls and boys on Earth, we would go with Jesus to Heaven, where we would stay forever.

I would miss Sam and all his enchanting tales, but I would never be sorry for him again, for wherever he had been, wherever he was, wherever he might be going, or when—I knew he had never been, and never would be lonely. There had always been and always would be someone "by his side." And I somehow felt that he would find more happiness in his new home than he had ever known before.

MARTHA BELL, senior, Stephen Decatur H. S.
Thelma M. Franklin, teacher

From IT ISN'T HEAVEN

At the fiery gates of Hell, Clyde wished in vain that he had counted all his penalty strokes and had kept an accurate handicap. . . .

Greeted at the smoldering doorstep by the Devil, Clyde immediately inquired whether there were any golf courses in Hell.

"Certainly," the Devil replied. "Here in Hell we have the finest golf course."

"Gee," gasped Clyde. "Imagine golf in Hell!"

As they approached the first tee, Clyde observed the most beautiful golf course he had ever seen. Stretching in front of him was a green carpet of rolling fairway with huge oaks lining the rough on both sides. In the distance white swans floated gracefully across a parallel water hazard, and the yellow flags on the green fluttered in the cool summer breeze.

"I'm glad you like it," said the Devil. "I'll meet you at the nineteenth hole, and you can join me for a drink."

"That'll sure be swell," Clyde enthusiastically replied. "I'll see you later then."

Clyde reached into his pocket and grabbed a tee. He inserted it into the ground and pulled out his new driver for a couple of practice swings. His muscles responded with enthusiasm, and he could tell by the grooved feeling that he was in for a hot round. He bent over and reached into the pocket of his golf bag for a ball.

"Hey, hold on there a minute!" Clyde called to the Devil, who was making his way back up the path to the pro shop. "I forgot to get any golf balls."

"Oh, you didn't forget," the Devil yelled back. "We don't have any golf balls here—that's the hell of it."

DEAN BOWKER, junior, Barrington H. S.
Joan Werhan, teacher

From UNDERSTANDING DEATH

For three months we had known that he was going to die. . . . One night, shortly after his bedtime story, he asked, "Mother, what is it like to die?"

Realizing what I must say to him, I pulled him close. "Remember last summer when you had no nap and we let you play hard all day? You came in so very tired that you ate your supper and went into Mother and Daddy's room to lie on your favorite rug. When darkness came, Daddy took you in his arms and carried you upstairs, where you slept all night in your own bed. The next morning you couldn't remember anything about being moved. That is like death, my son."

SUE BRACEWELL, sophomore, Springfield H. S.
Mrs. Helen Brooks, teacher

A PASSING FANCY

This was it! I was not going to be one of the thousands of ordinary, every-day people who go about the same routine day after day. There comes a time in most people's lives when they experience a burning desire or passion for a certain thing, but few are industrious enough to prepare themselves for their goal. But I was not going to allow myself merely to drift along. No sir, I was going to be a ballet dancer. Not just a ballet dancer but *the* ballet dancer. For generations to come, people would read about my outstanding achievements, about my rare grace and charm, about how I'd toss rose petals to the poor children from my lily white hands. I would be idolized.

My whole idea had originated at a dance recital. Awe-stricken and dreamy, I left the recital, burning with ambition. Afraid of being the object of jeers, I decided against revealing my plans to my family. However, I confided in an understanding friend who excitedly shared my secret. The two of us arranged somehow to be able to take ballet lessons.

We practiced, and we practiced, and we practiced. Now I smile when I remember the many times I exerted myself to the extent that I could no longer stand. We read books and more books about great successes in ballet and then practiced the things we learned. We cut out every picture or article we could find on the subject, and soon we had filled a big scrapbook which we called "Those Before Us." Diligently and faithfully we pushed forward.

The training continued through the second winter. Spring arrived with all its attractions, primarily baseball. Spring danced outside while I danced inside. The previous spring I hadn't even noticed the other kids outside because the ballet idea had then been fresh, exciting, new. But this spring, I decided it wouldn't hurt to set aside the slippers just once and pick up the bat in their place.

As the ball was pitched to me, I experienced a feeling of energetic freedom. I swung, and the ball sailed high through the air. As I ran, I wondered what had ever made we want to dance when I could be the first professional woman ball player! I visualized thousands of fans cheering from the stands while proudly I signed thousands of autograph books and . . .

MARILYNN POGACNIK, Morton H. S.

THE FLAG

It was a cold, rainy spring day in the year of 1945. I can remember vividly standing in a pool of water on a muddy street corner, clinging to my mother's hand. People were shouting joyously all around me, a band was playing, and in the distance someone was trying to deliver a speech above the commotion. No one seemed to mind the rain and the cold at all, not even my mother. She did not ask me if I was cold, or if I wanted to leave. I felt deserted and left out. I wanted desperately to go home, to get away from all the people, and to get out of the rain. Then, suddenly, the joyous shouts ceased, the band stopped playing, and only the soft patter of rain broke the silence. All heads were turned toward one direction, and all faces expressed a thankfulness and bliss I shall never forget. In the distance I saw a red, white, and blue flag slowly being raised. When it reached the sparkling gold ball at the top of the pole, a sigh passed through the crowd. Even a small girl of five sensed the intense joy as the majestic blue and white cross on the red background unfolded in the breeze. The band began to play again, and the people broke into a song I had heard many times, though I had never been taught the words, and I did not understand the meaning. Then my mother leaned down and whispered some words I shall never forget. "This is our flag," she said, "and our song. Norway is a free country!"

I know now what I saw and experienced that day. I saw the flag of my country, Norway, being raised for the first time in five years, and I heard our national anthem sung without fear for the first time in five years. Norway was liberated from German occupation; it was once again a free country.

TORIL ORRE, senior, Evanston Twp. H. S.
Mary L. Taft, teacher

From ECHOES

The footsteps echoed loudly down the deserted hallway like the tread of doom, but it was only Jim Newman, the night watchman, making his rounds. Jim had long ago got used to the silence and darkness his job in the museum involved, but the echoes still bothered him. They made him feel alone. . . . How long ago was it that he'd had his last really long interesting conversation with somebody? It must be two weeks now, ever since his roommate had moved out. Living alone and working alone at night somewhat shut off his social outlets. Well, at least it was a job.

"Hm, better check the rooms down in the fish department," Jim mumbled. . . . "Wonder if the new dolphin skeleton was installed today. Blasted echoes—I'm gonna have to buy some crepe soled shoes." The echoes followed Jim as he went to the reptile and amphibian section in the far part of the basement.

"Pardon me, young man," hailed a friendly old voice from the frog room, "I fell asleep with the stuffed salamanders in the next room, and now I'm locked in the building, it seems. This is very embarrassing." Then in the beam of his flashlight Jim saw a small old man in a worn blue overcoat shuffle from the frog room. Under one arm was a newspaper-wrapped package and under the dirty hat was the kind, wrinkled face of the old man with the friendly voice. "Oh dear, this is dreadful. I just intended to look at the lizards a little bit, and then I felt so drowsy that I just sat down in the corner to rest a bit. Apparently I fell asleep, because the next thing I knew it was dark, and then I heard your footsteps."

Jim listened to the shuffling footsteps going down the long steps of the museum. As he stood in the open doorway, he was enveloped in a friendly cloud of warm, silent night air. Then he turned around and started back inside. There on the edge of the information booth he saw the package—Charley's newspaper-wrapped package.

"Too late to call Charley back now," thought Jim, "might as well open it." A few seconds later a stuffed white salamander was resting in his hands. In the newspaper was an article that read: "Today the sale of the \$50,000 albino *Ambystoma* salamander was concluded to the City Museum of Natural History. The only other bidder for this rare animal was the world famed reptile expert, Charles 'Charley' Willis."

The footsteps still echoed loudly down the deserted hallway as Jim Newman carried the salamander back to its place, but it seemed to Jim that each one was followed by a friendly little shuffle.

RICHARD BULLIET, junior, West Rockford H. S.
Maud E. Weinschenk, teacher

FROM UP ABOVE

The giant bird trembles with the force of its driving power, the power that projects tons of steel through the air by the force of four small propellers. It glides gently up, bouncing softly into the invisible pockets of air. Far below, the plain spreads endlessly until it blends with the sky. The corduroy fields are neatly divided

into irregular rectangles by the knife-like country roads. Small insects crawl along the tiny white ribbons that link our great cities. Occasionally, a small stream, lost in the immensity, finds its way through the meadow. Suddenly you are above the clouds. They cover the earth like a blanket of lather. They are there, yet they seem so intangible. Then they begin to disperse. Darkness falls. The sphere below begins to sparkle. It looks as though everyone had set his Christmas tree out on his front lawn. Some of the trees are blue, some are white, some are red, some are of many colors. You can see the whole world. But wait . . . there is no man. He is so small that he is barely visible at all. He seems so insignificant in this complex world of ours, as seen from us above.

WILLIAM McKNIGHT, junior, University H. S., Normal
Vera Hoyman, teacher

From COMMERCIALS

Television, the wonder of our era, the light of many a home, the companion of the friendless, the technical marvel of the mechanical age, has a drawback. It is the programs. It's not that I don't enjoy a program or two now and then, but the commercials are so much more interesting! To stop in the middle of a grand commercial just to watch a program is downright annoying! I want to see more commercials and longer ones.

Just last night I saw a beaver brushing his teeth, a woman washing an orlon coat with a magnet, three more beavers and a bear advertising beer, and, most amazing of all, I saw—with my own eyes—the actual disintegration of a handkerchief afflicted with concentrated stomach acid! A group of airline pilots was raving to a stewardess about twenty-thousand filter traps. A comely lass in a helicopter invited me to "live modern!" A handsome man in a shower unabashedly sang to me about the deodorant action in his soap, while a lady in the bathtub said every bar of her soap was "one-quarter cleansing cream." A pint-sized English butler advised me to use his paper napkins because they "cling like cloth." Now how can I resist an argument made so convincingly?

I am gaining a fragmentary knowledge of German from a slightly inebriated man with bushywhite eyebrows. He claims his ale is made of choicest hops and malt, aged longer and served in tempting steins. Undoubtedly, commercials are the really interesting, the informative part of the show. . . . So let's abolish the pro-

grams entirely, and have more of those wonderful, and highly educational, commercials.

JO VELON, junior, Moline H. S.
Betty Roseberg, teacher

HONORABLE MENTION

- Bloomington: "The Shopper" by Skip Langdor; "Au Revoir, Madame" by Prudence Price (Maude Leonard).
- Bushnell-Prairie City: "Autumn Nocturne" by Pat Melvin; "Murder at Midnight" by Larry Hopper (Adele Armstrong).
- Decatur: "The Name's a Mystery" by Jan Inigle (Walter Kirby); "Worth the Trouble" by Shirley Tolly (Helen Stapp).
- Evanston: "A Walk on the Moon" by Bill Van Kirk (Edith L. Baumann); "Three Impressions" by Marianne Masterson, "Frosty" by Harold Brusman (Clarence W. Hach); "Fear" by Michael Fein, "Before the Attack" by Molly Wells, "The Plan" by Carolyn Luchs (Mary Jane Richeimer); "Runaway" by Mary Tingley, "The Walk" by Judith Kegan (Charlotte Whittaker); "The Gorge" by Henry Kisor, "The Owner's Dilemma" by Kenneth Deutsch (Mary Taft).
- Genoa-Kingston: "Rudiments" by Roy Lilly (Gladys Wibking).
- Glenbard: "A Teen-Age Crush" by Rosanne Hildenbrand (Faye Homrighous).
- Kansas: "Reunited" by Martha Sherer (Tressa Bennett).
- Kewanee: "Autumn" by Melinda Campbell (Eugene Ennis).
- Lawrenceville: "Rude Intrusion" by Jean Blair (Bessie Seed).
- Lexington: "Flames of Heredity" by Roger I. Ling, "A Lovely Day" by Gloria Maas (Gerald E. Smith).
- Lyons Township: "The Winter Prom" by Barbara Smith (Norma Jordan); "Road to Naples" by Lee Forrest (Kay Keefe).
- Moline: "Virtues of Laziness" by Dennis Faust (Betty Roseberg); "Niki" by Sharon Marshall, "Changing Skies" by Linda Parsons (DeWayne Roush).
- Morton: "Mary" by Julienne Frank (Grace Elliott); "My Dennis the Menace" by William Bedrava (Bernice Evans); "Into the Past" by Elizabeth Buck (E. L. Smith).
- Naperville: "Adventure" by Rod Stiefbold (Leona McBride); "How to Lose Weight" by Millicent Sherwood (Laura Wolverton).
- Northbrook: "The Road" by Rick Rogers (Jane Britton).
- Rockford: "Another Man's Burden" by Sandra Boyer (Maud E. Weinschenk).

Springfield: "Truble with Speling" by Sue Cantrill (Helen Brooks).

Sycamore: "Some Light for Nighttime" by Sarah McCormick (Margaret Adams).

Urbana: "Childhood Fears" by Susan Mitchell, "Cattails in the Sunset" by Betsy Wallace (Marian Seward); "When We Were Very Young" by Roger Ebert (Viola Grebanovsky).

